

Mid-April 2020



# Temple Talk “LITE”

## Bits of News to Stay Connected to the TI-JCC community

*Editor's note: As we all maintain a physical distance during the COVID-19 pandemic, we will bring you short Temple Talk newsletters to help stay everyone stay connected until we can once again at TI-JCC. Contributors were asked to send short pieces with helpful information, to share skills or hobbies, and provide quick concise updates about their committees.*

### FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

#### A Seder That Was Different From All Other Seders Rabbi Fine

We did not have to cook for many people, but yet grocery shopping was more challenging than ever. We were separated from loved ones but somehow everyone had become adept at communications technology. We had cancelled the synagogue's community seder, but somehow we still had one.

This year's Passover raised various challenges and stresses, and I am grateful for our TI-JCC family for helping me mark and celebrate what has always been my favorite holiday. The seder we did on the first night was very special. I scheduled a Zoom webinar, which meant that I first had to learn the difference between a Zoom webinar and a Zoom meeting. Alla and I, and Laurence and Ariel, prepared for a seder having no idea how many "guests" we would have. After setting the table we had to figure out what was the best spot for the computer, which I situated so that the seder plate and the matzos were on the screen most of the time, and I could swivel the laptop depending on who was speaking. We had to make sure we were gathered at the 6:30 start time, and it felt as if a television crew were setting up in our dining room. But then the familiar rituals and melodies of the seder took over, and we found ourselves transcending the coronavirus days of 2020 to a more timeless and secure reality.



Remembering ourselves as if we were leaving Egypt, we knew that the unleavened bread that was baked in a hurry would not be for naught, as the Israelites manage to get out in time every year. We ate the maror and swallowed the harsh bitterness, but knew that it would be followed by a sweet and sumptuous meal, as it is every year. We turned the video off for an hour as we enjoyed our festive meal, aware that we were four around a table, but were about fifty on the Zoom. Reconnecting after the meal, I figured out how to make everyone "panelists" so we could see each other and together, sing the songs of the haggadah with folks nearby and far. And in the end, the prayer "Next Year in Jerusalem!" held the same hope and longing that it does every year.

### Yom HaShoah

Yom HaShoah was observed from Monday evening April 20<sup>th</sup> through Tuesday, April 21. While we are saddened that circumstances prevented our coming together in person (as we had intended to do), the Ridgewood community joins together as we do each year in remembering the Holocaust.



Click <https://vimeo.com/408963156> at any time through April 25 to see the commemoration service held last year (May 1, 2019) at West Side Presbyterian Church (including the participation of Rabbi Fine, Rabbi Moser, guest speaker Rabbi Marans, and the interfaith choir led by Tamara Freeman). Please join us in virtual community as we commemorate the Holocaust through last year's gathering.

Wayne Miller has also produced a moving video to commemorate Yom HaShoah, at <https://bit.ly/3cwYWgJ>.

## WORDS FROM RABBI LEIAH MOSER

On Sunday the 12th, the fourth day of Passover, Reconstructing Judaism held a movement-wide community Hallel sing-along, billed as "Make A Joyful Noise." Over Zoom, with folks signed in to watch and participate from across the country, 12 Reconstructionist rabbis joined their voices, instruments, and hearts together to offer up a spirited, spiritual, and musical take on our people's traditional liturgy of celebration. (For those of you who weren't able to make it, a video recording is available on [Reconstructing Judaism's Facebook page](#))



You might have thought that amidst the COVID-19 pandemic gripping our country and the world right now, there wouldn't have been a lot to celebrate. It is certainly true that many of us have lost friends and loved ones to the virus, and the anxiety a lot of us are feeling right now is real and justified. Even so, I still have to affirm that as a community, we collectively have a good deal of cause for celebration. As people have taken shelter in their homes and done their best to cope with the medical and economic impact of the pandemic, I have seen countless instances of folks going above and beyond the call of duty to lend a helping hand to others.

Whether it's a grocery run for those who can't make it out, a sympathetic ear for someone who needs to vent their feelings, or technical support for someone having trouble with the various online platforms that have been sustaining our connections with each other during social distancing, the cumulative impact of our efforts to help each other through this crisis is tremendous.

Another cause for celebration for me personally has been to see how many members of the community have been redoubling their participation in synagogue events during all of this. With everything that's been going on, people might be forgiven for feeling like participating in services and Jewish education would be their lowest priority. What I've seen, however, is that much of our programming has been better-attended during social distancing than it was before the pandemic! This speaks to me of our deep and abiding need for organic community, as well as the tremendous spiritual comfort our tradition can provide in times of trouble.

Finally, I am deeply inspired by the creativity folks have shown in adapting their Jewish practice to the needs of the moment. If "necessity is the mother of invention," then we can take a certain amount of comfort in the fact that our creative solutions to the troubles facing us at the moment increase the scope of tools available to us in making Jewish community more engaging and accessible for everyone. We've had people participating in services from halfway around the world, people who under ordinary circumstances simply don't have a Jewish community nearby to engage with. This year, Ross and I were pleased to be able to invite members of the community to celebrate Second Seder with us in our home, from the safety of their own homes. All these innovations and more not only sustain us, but help us grow in the midst of the crisis.

At the risk of repeating myself, I don't want to downplay the depth of hardship being faced by many folks in the world right now, including a lot of people in our congregation. This has been a rough couple of months to be sure, and at the moment the signs seem to point to more rough times ahead. But despite the rough times, I think it's important to take a moment to celebrate the resiliency, compassion, and creativity with which people are tackling the challenges before them.

*L'shalom,  
Rabbi Leah Moser*

### Reconstructing Judaism's Virtual Shabbat Box

As a pandemic resource, Reconstructing Judaism sends out a weekly virtual Shabbat box to foster Reconstructionist community. It contains materials, essays, meditations, and other resources to add some joy, comfort, and inspiration. You can access the weekly virtual Shabbat box at <https://www.reconstructingjudaism.org/>; from the Home page go to Connect>Pandemic Resources for the link.





## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear friends:

It has been so long since we have been together, most recently on March 7, at our Ways & Means event. That seems like an eternity ago. Now, it seems that no matter how comfortable or not we are with technology, we all are pretty proficient with Zoom or Facetime!

It has been great seeing so many regulars and many other members logging in to our Shabbat and Pesach services the past couple of weeks. If you have not joined us for services yet please do. The access is very easy and the link is shown in our weekly announcements. We all prefer to see each other, but everyone has the option of turning their own video off. If you'd like an easy tutorial, please write to me and I'm glad to walk you through it!

I'd like to thank all those who have led services over Zoom or chanted Haftorah: Abe Davis, Tamara Freeman, David Millman, and Nanette Rosenbaum. If you'd like to chant a Haftorah, please contact David Millman, our ritual chair. David Weiss will be chanting the Emor Haftorah on May 9<sup>th</sup>.

Despite our building being closed I am glad to say that our business is actively engaged. Our building is being properly maintained by Jose and Tina, and all of our accounting tasks are being performed by Maureen. Our school is still in session, now remotely, just like our public schools; and BCHSJS, whose home is at TI, is also conducting their classes online. We had a delightful Zoom class on the Sunday preceding Pesach from Tamara Freeman, on how to bake chocolate macaroons! About 20 people participated.

We are all looking for ways to stay connected virtually so if you have an idea, please share it with me or any other leader at TI. We are planning other fun and educational events through Zoom in the near future.

Unfortunately, as we are made aware of by Rabbi Fine, we have lost some temple members or family members to the COVID-19 virus. It is such a difficult task to plan a funeral and shiva while social distancing. The new reality is that we have virtual shiva, so please show our members and friends your support through your participation. It may seem awkward; however, we want to comfort those in our community the best we can during their difficult time.

Lastly, I'd like to thank Rabbi Fine for his extraordinary effort in balancing Pesach, Shabbat services, illness, and death all during the most challenging of times. I'm sure you share my sentiment that it will be great when we can all gather together again under our beautiful roof on Grove Street!

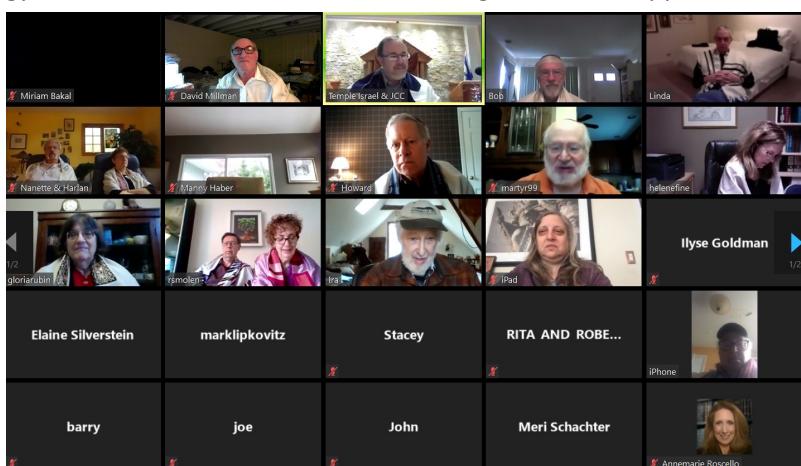
*L'hitraot,  
Howard Schreiber, President*

## RITUAL ROUNDUP

I'm thrilled to report that our Shabbat, weekday, and holiday services were/are all well attended as they continue on a regular basis. Many have embraced the technology that allows our virtual services through the Zoom application, affording us with live two-way audio and video participation.

Huge thanks to the technical expertise of **Wayne Miller**, help from **Stacey Scott**, and the tremendous efforts of **Rabbi Fine** (who leads all the services and leyns all the Torah readings). Thanks also to those who step in to lead a service or chant a haftarah.

**David Millman**  
**Ritual Chair**



## **Remembering two long-time Temple Israel members who passed away this past week**

Their families have shared these touching tributes to their beloved Walter Herzberg and Leonard Trugman.

### **Walter Herzberg**

Dr. Walter J. Herzberg passed away on April 15th, 2020 at age 92. He is survived by his loving wife of 62 years, Miriam Herzberg, his children Stephen, Ian and Suzanne Herzberg, his sister, Ursula Cher, and his grandchildren: Jessica and Michael Herzberg, Leah and Benjamin Herzberg, David, Raphael, Daniel and Jonah Herzberg Mayer.



Walter was born in Gütersloh, Germany and escaped Nazi Germany in 1939 by immigrating to Sydney, Australia. He obtained his PhD in chemistry from University of California at Berkeley before pursuing a career in research. He was active in his synagogues, Congregation B'nai Israel of Fair Lawn and Temple Israel. In 1982, he combined his German skills and expertise in science to launch SciTech Translations, of which he was the proud owner until 2019. He continued to work occasionally from his final home at the Ambassador of Scarsdale in White Plains, NY up until a week before his death. He lived a full life and will be missed by all.

### **Leonard Trugman**

Leonard Trugman, 82 passed away April 18<sup>th</sup>, with his beloved wife of 55 years, Riva by his side at Englewood Hospital. Both were being treated for COVID-19. As a husband, father, grandfather, professor, executive, and engineer he always led with his heart. Leonard's and Riva's was the sweetest of love stories, with laughter and care for one another. Their marriage was and remains a role model for his children and five "gifts from G-d", their grandchildren.

Leonard was an author and successful executive before returning to teaching at CUNY where he studied engineering; he went on to get an MBA from Farleigh Dickinson University and studied toward a PHD at Stevens Institute of Technology, where he also taught early in life. He loved sports, especially hockey. He loved learning, He loved Israel, having visited 17 times. He was a lifelong member of Temple Israel and loved going to Saturday services. As he and Riva aged, Leonard never grew old in spirit, retaining his great sense of humor and quest for knowledge. He never grew bitter, he just grew sweeter; he was a kind sweet man. He would beam with pride at the mention of his children or grandchildren or at seeing one of the many photos in their home. He loved many things: good food, good friends, good jokes, and his entire family, but he lived for his grandchildren, they were his "oxygen." He will be sorely missed by the many lives he touched along the way, as a professor, an executive, and a family man.

He is survived by his beloved wife Riva, son Jonathon and daughter-in-law Beth, daughter Robyn and son in-law Jeffrey, sister Barbara and grandchildren Ali, Justin, Kyle, Kayla, and Tori. He was a happy and proud man no matter the circumstance.

*The Temple Israel community extends condolences to the Herzberg & Trugman families as well as to Joan Baslaw, Caryn Goodman, Bob Obeiter, Lori Solomon, and Fern Weis and to their families on their recent losses.*



## Tikkun Olam

This is a time not only to stay safe ourselves but also to help others in our community who are much less fortunate than we are. Here are some things you can do:

### Donate

When the coronavirus emergency was first declared, the food pantry at **Social Services of Ridgewood** was cleaned out. Through community donations, it's been restocked, but the need is ongoing. Go to the agency's website at <https://www.ssaridgewood.org/>. Your donation will go directly to people in need in our community.

Many of the residents of **Ridgecrest Senior Housing** are food-insecure and rely on the food pantry and donations to get by. Out of an abundance of caution, Ridgecrest can no longer accept in-kind donations. However, Ridgecrest is in need of financial donations to help offset the cost of the care packages that are being distributed to residents. Here is a link to the website where donations can be made: <https://www.ridgecrestseniorhousing.org/get-involved>.

**S.H.A.R.E., Inc.** is a private, not-for-profit 501(c)3, non-denominational corporation which provides an affordable home-like environment for independent seniors within the Ridgewood community. You can donate to S.H.A.R.E. at <https://shareridgewood.org/covid-19-impacts/>.

**S.H.A.R.E.** also welcomes dinner deliveries to its residences in two homes in Ridgewood. [info@signupgenius.com](mailto:info@signupgenius.com). Many thanks to Sue Hill, Evan Weitz, Corina Arorenau, Tamara Amos, and Jane Rosen who volunteered to provide dinners in April. The need for dinners continues to be great in the upcoming months.

### Give Blood

Despite the current shelter-in-place regulations, FEMA has specifically identified blood donation as an "essential and integral component of the emergency support function." Blood drives are not gatherings: they are blood donation operations that are key to our public health and safety. Dr. Jerome Adams, U.S. Surgeon General, said Americans need to donate blood to help stave off deaths caused by the pandemic. "One person giving blood can help up to three people and possibly save a life," he said. While the CDC has cautioned against nonessential travel and gatherings, Dr. Adams encourages healthy people to visit blood donation sites.

**There are several ways to donate blood in our community.** You can give blood through Vitalant, which has locations in Paramus and Montvale. Make an appointment online at <https://www.vitalant.org/Home.aspx>. You can also donate through the Red Cross; for locations and appointments, go to <https://www.redcross.org/give-blood.html>

### Family Promise Walk-In Dinner Program

Our efforts help Family Promise continue the Walk-in Dinner program, which has provided dinner for Bergen County's homeless population every day for over 28 years. Many thanks to everyone who donated food or time to provide dinner on March 31st at the Hackensack shelter. The shelter was delighted to see so many of us, as many regular volunteers have opted not to serve and, in some instances, not to provide food.

As the shul is closed now, instead of cooking the meal in the kitchen, we purchased our entree and salad from Ridgewood's own The Best of Everything. It was great to support a local business and they gave us a terrific discount. Please support them if you can with a takeout order now or visit when we are all back to congregating more freely.

Given the new protocol at the shelter, we provided 60 residents with dinner and 40 members of the community with takeout. The menu got rave reviews: lasagna, salad, rolls, fruit cocktail and cookies, cookies, cookies. If you are interested in volunteering to support this program, please contact Nadine Genet at [nzgenet@outlook.com](mailto:nzgenet@outlook.com), as ways to support the homeless and this food-insecure population are being updated on a regular basis.



Donations to support the Walk-In Dinner Program and other food-related Tikkun Olam efforts can be directed to the Reeve Fund at Temple Israel.

We hope everyone is safe and well. Please enjoy the beautiful report from a BMC Executive Committee member, Evan Fleischmann.

**Scott Baslaw**  
**President**

**From Evan:**

Our family struck what may be a new Pesach tradition this year. It began with a group text from my Aunt Linda, a single picture, and two words. The picture was of a beautifully set, yet lonely seder table for two. And of course, the two words were "Happy Passover!" The picture inspired me to quickly snap a picture of our developing seder table to share. Then over the next several minutes, that new message sound made more noise than the kitchen exhaust fan. And there it was, a collage of seder tables that shrank 1000's of miles into a few inches. Seder tables from Florida, Long Island, Upstate NY, Rockland County, and of course good ol' West Milford.

Each of these pictures told the same story in a different way. There were pictures of kitchen tables and dining room tables; tables set for one and tables set for five. Tables with heirloom seder plates and tables with brand new seder plates. In a normal year, we would all meet in one home and partake of that family's traditions. But in 5780 we each put out our best crystal, china, and linen. Each home had the best brisket, matzo balls, and singing of Dayenu. And call me selfish, but my silver lining was getting to eat all of the leftover brisket.



So time will tell if the story of Exodus requires another chapter with another glass of wine, but the 5780 retelling will always be remembered. L'Chaim!

**Pass the Guacamole . . .**  
**A recipe from Josh Holden**

On the third day of Passover, in the spring of COVID, a friend texted with a desperate emergency: she needed Pesadich tortilla chips to go with her guacamole. The avocados wouldn't last another week! Could I make such a thing? She said she knew was asking for "the sun, the moon & stars." It took half a day of recipe development, but here it is—tortilla chips that are thin yet strong enough to scoop, crispy but not hard, not at all greasy, and shockingly un-matzah-like (though maybe a bit more pita chip than corn chip). Turns out the key is making tortillas before you turn them into chips.

**The Sun, The Moon & Stars (Passover Tortilla Chips)**

3 C. matzah cake meal  
3-4 tsp. salt (4 for that bag-chip saltiness)  
1.5 C. warm water  
½ C. olive oil (don't skimp!)

Using your hands, mix ingredients thoroughly to form a dough, adding the oil after the water has been incorporated. Pull off a 2" ball, keeping the rest covered. Roll out the ball between two sheets of wax paper to an even thickness of about 1/8 inch; the tortilla should be about 12 x 8 inches. Make sure the edges are not thinner or are even slightly thicker than the middle, or they will separate as it bakes. (A French pin works best).

Bake at 375°, preferably on a baking or pizza stone, until the edges are just barely brown, flipping once (about 15 minutes total). Take out and allow to cool slightly; the tortilla won't be completely soft but should not be brittle. Use a knife to cut into chip-sized pieces and deep fry at 375° until tan, about 3-5 minutes. The oil will not bubble as vigorously as usual. Drain, then cool on paper towels.



## Notes from Tamara's Virtual Cooking Class

Dear Friends,

Thanks for attending my April 5 zoom Passover cookie-cooking class. As promised, here is the recipe for your review.

### Tamara Freeman's Two-Layer Passover Cookies *super chocolatey and yummy, parve and gluten-free*

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 8 oz. semi-sweet Baker's or kosher for Passover chocolate, broken into pieces
- 4 Tbsp. margarine (or butter if you prefer)
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp. vanilla and/or almond extract
- 1/3 C. sugar
- 1½ C. shredded sweetened coconut
- ½ - 1 C. sliced almonds
- ¼ C. colored sprinkles (optional)

#### DIRECTIONS:

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees.

Prepare a 8"x8" pan: Spray the bottom and sides with Pam cooking spray. Line the pan with a 8"x8" sheet of parchment paper, and spray the paper, too.

In a medium bowl, melt the chocolate in the microwave for 2 minutes. Carefully remove the bowl; it will be hot. Stir the chocolate until it is smooth and silky. Pour the melted chocolate into the prepared pan and smooth out the chocolate until it evenly covers the bottom of the pan. Put the pan in the fridge to cool, for at least 10 minutes.

In the meantime, in a different, larger bowl, melt the margarine for about 30 seconds. Add the sugar, vanilla and almond extract and stir until well combined. Stir in the egg. Add the coconut and mix thoroughly, then the almonds.

Take the pan out of the fridge and check the chocolate. It should be firm to the touch. Ladle out the coconut-almond mixture onto the chocolate base. Smooth out the mixture so that it is evenly distributed and completely covers the chocolate. If you would like, pour colored sprinkles over half of the pan so that you end up with "two" different cookies!

Bake the cookies for 30 minutes or until the top is golden. Let the pan completely cool. Put the cookies in the fridge for at least 15 minutes, or preferably over-night.

Run a knife along the edge of the pan. Flip the giant cookie upside-down onto a cutting board. Remove the parchment paper. Flip the cookie right-side up and cut into bars with a very heavy, large knife to ensure precise edges. Place the cookies onto your prettiest plate, serve, and enjoy. Accept all of the compliments graciously!

These cookies freeze very well. Stack them onto a sheet of aluminum foil, seal the foil and then place the package into a plastic bag. See the photos, below. Enjoy them all year 'round.



## Services via Zoom

Familiar, friendly faces in little squares on my computer screen.  
You are my sacred Temple family.  
    You make my heart smile.  
    Rabbi Fine leads the services,  
        And reads from the Torah,  
    Being called up, he recites the prayers,  
        Before and after each Aliyah.  
    David Millman chants Haftorah and we follow along,  
        Pretending we are in physically with him.  
When he does that, the Rabbi sits alone in one of the pews,  
    And it tugs at my soul to see all the emptiness.  
    My heart cries for us to be together physically.  
    I pray that it be soon, Lord.  
    God is with us, none-the-less,  
        Always and everywhere,  
    And my heart is filled with joy.  
How I dream of us all enjoying a festive Kiddush,  
    Together, back to normal.  
        Can't be soon enough.  
Not just to please me, but to let us share ourselves again.  
    Meanwhile, we must be strong.  
        We must stay healthy.  
We must remain united as a congregation.  
    So Zoom it is . . . for now.

-Bob Dworkin

## Mark your calendar for the TI-JCC annual meeting: Wed., May 27

We will hold our annual Temple Israel membership meeting on **Wednesday, May 27th at 7:30pm**. A letter was mailed before Passover, which is delayed within the US Postal Service. A digital copy of the letter was distributed via email to ensure everyone has plenty of notice. The letter contains the meeting agenda, minutes from last year's meeting, the slate of officers to be elected, and several amendments to the TI-JCC constitution to be voted upon. Please review it in advance of the meeting.



## IN NEED OF FINANCIAL HELP DUE TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS?

The **Paterson Hebrew Free Loan Association** will provide interest-free loans to support individuals and small businesses with financial challenges due to the coronavirus outbreak in Bergen and Passaic counties.

Through its COVID-19 Impact Program, PHFLA will provide interest-free loans up to \$3600, due to emergencies because of: lost wages, small-business owner needs, childcare costs due to school closures, or medical costs related to the virus. **To get started, call the Paterson Hebrew Free Loan Association at 201-791-8395.**

## Chesed: Here When you Need Us

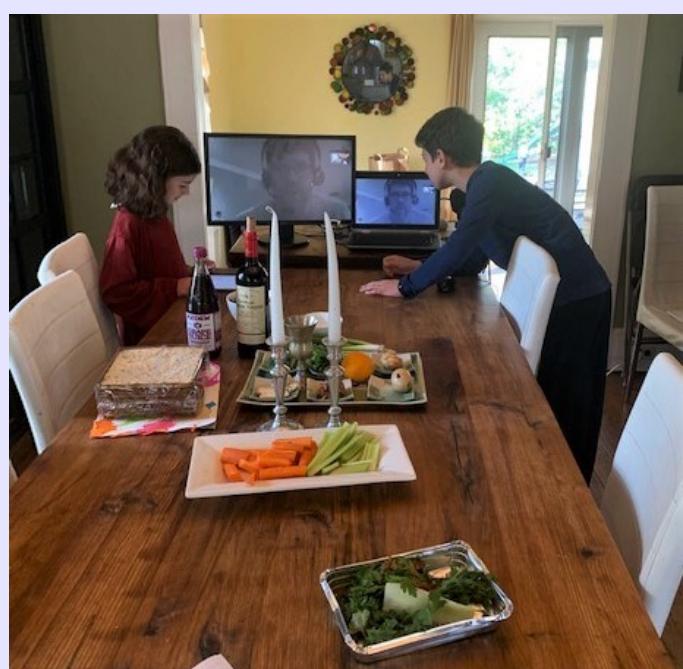
The Chesed Committee maintains a collection of gently used medical equipment available for loan by congregants. We currently have canes, crutches, walkers, and a wheelchair. We hope you won't need any of these, but remember us if you do. If you have **gently used medical equipment (small items only)** that you'd like to donate, or if you have need of these items, **call Elyse Levene to make arrangements at 201-306-1283.**

**We asked members to share some of their Passover pictures to show how they were spending the holiday.**

**From the Leimans:**



**And the Della Torres:**



**From Robyn Berger:** Here is my brand-new, 18-year-old, Passover stuff. Got as a wedding shower present and never used before.



**Dave Millman sent this:**

For the week of Passover, I focused on an alternative occupation. Hint: not Butcher, not Candlestick Maker. See picture depicting my edible wares.

**Thank you everyone, for sharing some of this year's Passover memories with us!**

